

Lort Smith Annual Report 2016



Lort Smith
caring for animals

Lort Smith Annual Report 2016

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It's all about Pets, People & Impact

Lort Smith is a unique organisation. The breadth of our services and the impact these services have on both animals and the community have few, if any, peers on a global scale.

While we are an organisation primarily committed to caring for animals, we are equally an organisation that cares for people. Through our Hospital, Adoption Centre and Community Outreach programs, we help tens of thousands of people each year.

There is a growing body of research that demonstrates that animals have the capacity to profoundly impact peoples' lives; most notably their physical and mental health. Animals can also help reduce stress and anxiety, they can reduce a sense of isolation, and they provide significant companionship. Our fundamental mission is preserving the human-animal bond by keeping people and pets together.

The unique impact Lort Smith has had, and continues to have, on the lives of people and animals was epitomised in the book 'The Kindness of Strangers' which records the history of the Hospital (until 2003).

Excerpt:

"The ... vision was that the Hospital would provide a place where people of limited financial resources could obtain veterinary treatment for their animals. While this altruistic goal may have been to reduce unnecessary suffering by ill and injured animals, the Hospital has also helped to reduce the anxiety, pain and grief felt by the thousands of people who have had to accompany their animals to the Hospital. Thus, throughout its long history the Hospital has been committed to serving both animal welfare and social welfare – a unique vision."

The Kindness of Strangers by Felicity Jack

For the last 80 years, Lort Smith has provided enduring positive impact on people, their animals and the community. We do this uniquely in several ways:

- In the **Hospital** we provide significant discounts to people of lesser means and payment plans to everyone including people facing financial hardship. A Chaplain (understood to be the only role of its kind in the world) is also employed by the Hospital to support people through their grief of losing a pet.
- Through the **Adoption Centre** we provide people who can no longer care for their pets with an option to surrender rather than euthanise them. This gives animals a second chance and the community an opportunity to adopt a beautiful addition to their family.
- Through our **Community Outreach** programs we assist people in the community who are often in complex, traumatic or isolated situations. This includes our Pet Therapy program where more than 100 volunteers take their dogs to visit facilities such as hospitals, aged care facilities, immigration detention centres and homeless hostels. Our Adoption Centre also supports people in crisis such as victims of domestic violence or people temporarily institutionalised, by providing emergency boarding for their pet so they are able to seek the help and support they need.

Most importantly, today the lights never go out at Lort Smith. Our passionate and committed team provide incredible care to people and animals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.

This report serves to highlight the incredible work undertaken in 2016 to support the community through the care of animals and people.

Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision

To be the recognised leader in Australia for animal health and wellbeing.

Our Mission

To improve the health and happiness of animals and the people who care for them.

How we do this:

In our **Hospital** by providing exceptional veterinary care and preserving the human-animal bond irrespective of a person's circumstance.

In our **Adoption Centre** by providing sanctuary, rehabilitation, welfare and a new home for animals.

Through our **Community Outreach** programs promoting responsible pet ownership and nurturing the human-animal bond.

Our Values

Care and compassion

We treat all people and animals with kindness and empathy.

Quality and affordability

We work together in a safe environment to provide accessible and sustainable services of the highest standard.

Integrity and respect

We have the courage to do what is right, be accountable for our actions, and communicate honestly and courteously.

Zoe and Ella with Jax
PICTURE David Caird for Herald Sun



**Improving the
health and
happiness of
animals and
people**



Chair's message

It's a privilege to be the Chair of Lort Smith. I'm constantly humbled by the generosity of the many and varied people helping to shape our future and deliver on our vision and mission every day.

It's an incredible time of growth and development for this unique and special organisation.

However, we would not be where we are today without the sterling and valued contribution of my predecessor, Glenister Lamont, who has stepped down after 12 years as a Director, including five as President.

Glenister, together with all of the Board, staff and volunteers, has worked hard to help shape a new chapter for Lort Smith. The result is a master plan that will see us in future serve a much larger community and even more families, including families of limited means – yes, animals are family.

We plan to open a second animal facility in the northern suburbs in the next few years and we are now actively looking to buy the land. In time, we will also renovate our existing Villiers Street facility to add new specialist services, with a focus on accident and emergency and referral services while continuing to serve the local community.

At Lort Smith, we're incredibly fortunate to have such a strong and diverse band of supporters, donors and partners. This year saw us launch the Guardian Circle – a giving program designed to bring together like-minded people who share a common love of animals and recognition of the benefits they give people in all stations of life.

Each year Guardian Circle contributions will go towards funding specific projects or areas of need – initiatives such as expanded community outreach, equipment for the Hospital or Adoption Centre and provision of critical animal care.

This year, the foundation Guardian Circle members' contributions of more than \$95,000 went towards our new Adoption Hub, which is now open, enabling people seeking animal companionship to meet and interact with animals needing new homes in a cage-free environment.

The Guardian Circle was launched at the Myer family home and was hosted by Sam Baillieu AM, who after stepping down from our Board, has become our Co-Patron along with her Aunt Lady Southey AC.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge Dr Di Gibney, who has stepped down from the Board, and to welcome new Board members Fiona Webster and Andrew Miles.



Barbara Pesel, Chair with Louie

A big thank you and acknowledgement goes out to our CEO David Herman, our dedicated vets, nurses, client service people, leadership, and administrative teams and our amazing crew of more than 400 committed and passionate volunteers who regularly go beyond the call of duty.

My final thanks go to Louis, the cheeky mud-loving dog I adopted last year who has captured my heart, enriched my life and proven yet again how very special the human-animal bond is.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Barbara Pesel'.

Barbara Pesel

CEO's message

To simply recognise 2016 as a successful celebration of our 80th anniversary year would be a complete understatement. Over the last 12 months Lort Smith experienced a period of rapid and dynamic change, completed a number of significant projects and has taken considerable steps towards its long term strategic goals.

In many ways, the year just completed mirrors the experience of our founder Louisa Lort Smith in 1936. During 2016, I took the opportunity to research the foundations of the organisation. What I found was an inspiring comparison that galvanises the journey we still share today.

Louisa Lort Smith was a strong and independent woman whose steadfast commitment to caring for animals and helping people of lesser means, created an institution that today has few – if any – peers on a global scale. Louisa found a unique way to provide social welfare through the care and support of animals. She was clearly a visionary who knew the power of the human-animal bond and its impact on the health and wellbeing of everyone irrespective of their personal circumstances.

Through innovation, commitment and vision, Louisa Lort Smith created an iconic institution that has stood the test of time since 1936. As custodians of this vision, I am extremely proud of our recent achievements which echo the innovation, commitment and spirit upon which this organisation was founded.

In 2016, we embarked on a change program designed to support our long term sustainability. This change program required the committed contribution, belief and support from every person, tier and facet of the organisation. With sincere thanks to the Board, management, staff, volunteers, donors, bequestors, supporters, suppliers and stakeholders, we have laid the foundations for a future program that is set to provide significant long term social impact through the unique care, comfort and support of companion animals.

We pleasingly achieved a number of exciting highlights and milestones over the last twelve months most notably:

Strategic Plan

In 2016, we launched our new five year strategic plan supporting the organisation's vision through to 2020. This is a fundamental and significant document developed through considerable consultation with the Board, management, staff and stakeholders. The simple vision of the strategic plan is to establish



David Herman, CEO with Hazel and Pearl

a pathway for Lort Smith to achieve a sustainable position over the next five years.

Our Hospital

Our Hospital continued to provide exceptional and affordable veterinary care to the community of Melbourne, including most importantly people of lesser means. In 2016, our 63 vets and 96 nurses recorded 37,966 consultations and 5,722 surgeries. In supporting our mission, we also provided \$1,428,608 worth of discounts to people of lesser means.

Overnight care reached its 12 month anniversary in September 2016. Through this period, we have seen referrals grow considerably; providing many suburban vets with a much needed avenue of care for its clients.

In the same month, with the generous support of major donors and the supplier GE, we installed a CT scanner in the Hospital. The business case supporting this piece of high definition diagnostic equipment was built around its affordability to people of lesser means. Operation over the last few months has been promising.

Our Adoption Centre

In 2016, we commenced construction and principally completed our new Adoption Hub. This innovative project is set to redefine the way people adopt companion pets. The facility is essentially “cage free” and provides a relaxed, interactive and fun environment for families and individuals to adopt. The Adoption Hub not only cements our mission to find homes for surrendered animals, but also provides a showcase for the community to learn about the three arms of our organisation.

In addition to building the new facility, our Community & Development Department completed a significant review of operations to ensure the Adoption Hub functions as efficiently as possible. This review involved the support of staff and volunteers alike.

We have laid the foundations for a future program that is set to provide significant long term social impact through the unique care, comfort and support of companion animals.

Notwithstanding all the development activity, our Adoption Centre also proudly found homes for 1,011 animals in 2016.

Our Community Outreach

Our Community and Development Department completed several key initiatives in 2016 designed to support the long term sustainability of Lort Smith. These initiatives included a comprehensive review and restructure of our Pet Therapy program. This review culminated in the recruitment and on-boarding of new Pet Therapy teams which in turn allowed us to expand our service to organisations like the Peter McCallum Cancer Centre and the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre at the Austin Hospital.

Additionally, we also completed a phase one review of our volunteering program, focussed our attention on the vital laundry function and continued to explore growth opportunities for our Emergency Welfare Assistance program.

Our Fundraising

In 2016, we launched an unprecedented number of new fundraising campaigns. These campaigns were designed to not only refresh our supporter base but to intimately reconnect with the community. Our Pet Protector Campaign (linked to the new Backyard Heroes initiative), reaches out to pet owners and celebrates the importance of the human animal bond. Similarly, our new Guardian Circle is a major donor program that provides people who are committed to social welfare and the care of animals with an opportunity to participate in ground-breaking projects.

Our Organisation

In 2016, we also undertook initiatives to improve the support and leadership we provide to our community of staff and volunteers. We have launched a new initiative to develop a culture of safety. We have also established the foundations for improved career pathways with a renewed focus on leadership and career development as well as a commitment to organisational health and wellbeing.

Our 80th anniversary year has been an exceptional 12 month period. This level of change and growth cannot be achieved without the commitment and support of every member of the team.

I would like to thank our former Chair Glenister Lamont for his support and guidance and thank our new Chair Barbara Pesel for her enthusiastic support of our endeavours. Thanks also go to all Board members and sub-committee members for their drive and commitment.

I am incredibly proud of the efforts of the Executive Leadership Team who took on a great number of challenges in 2016. Through their hard work, creativity and drive, we managed to achieve the many milestones noted in this report.

Most importantly, I want to recognise the efforts of our staff and volunteers who have adopted our new vision and made the changes we have implemented a reality.

And finally to our donors and bequestors, our heartfelt thanks again to you for your support. Without your generosity, we would not be in a position to be making such a difference in the world.

Of course, we are not resting on our laurels – this is just the beginning of a very exciting journey for Lort Smith as well as the animals and people we support.



David Herman

Executive Leadership Team



December 2016 marked the 12 month anniversary of the new Executive Leadership Team (ELT). In 2016, the ELT guided the delivery of several important projects.

There was a challenging agenda set in 2016 focussed on the delivery of a number of major projects. The team, in conjunction with the management team, staff and volunteers, worked collaboratively on these projects, achieving some critical milestones.

With input from the ELT a new five-year strategic plan was launched, driving the agenda in 2016 and beyond.



In September Lort Smith introduced a CT scanner, one of the first in the country to be used in a veterinary practice. The introduction of the CT scanner was transformational for Lort Smith, allowing us to not only provide the best care for animals, but with GE's support, we are also able to provide CT services at a discount for people on low incomes.

Each member of the ELT was involved in the development of the new Adoption Hub (officially opened in February 2017). Their contributions have resulted in a world's best practice Adoption Centre. We understand it is the first of its kind in Australia based on a non-incarceration model. This new model of caring for animals waiting to be adopted redefines our adoption mission.



Two significant fundraising programs were launched – our regular giving program Pet Protector and our major giving program the Guardian Circle. These programs were developed as part of the strategic response for greater long-term financial sustainability.

Our Shared Services Department provided continued sound management of the organisation's finances. This department also commenced an important Information and Communication Technology review during the year.



Master planning was another major focus throughout 2016, with the Board sub-committee, ELT and Board focussed on identifying and solidifying the future direction of the organisation. This involved considerable analysis and consultation to identify the long-term needs of the organisation and its clients and the resources required (financial and physical) to meet these needs.

Consolidation of the projects and efforts undertaken in 2016 is now a key focus for the ELT – ensuring the organisation is able to continue to support the ever growing need for its services in the community.



*David Herman, CEO
with Pearl and Hazel*

*Joe Corera, Head of Shared
Services with Jazz*

*Jenny Ford, Head of Community
& Development with Lexi*

*Dr Russell Harrison,
Head of Hospital with Osiris*

*Katrina Wilkins,
Head of Fundraising &
Communications with Sammy*

Lort Smith Board of Directors



Barbara Pesel
Chair (from November 2016)

Barbara joined the Board in September 2011. Barbara has more than 30 years' experience in corporate communication focusing on issues, risk and crisis management, stakeholder engagement and strategic planning. Barbara is the Managing Director of Pesel & Carr, an award-winning independent strategic communications agency she founded in 1997.

"It doesn't matter if you're climbing the corporate ladder or sleeping on the streets, and it doesn't matter if your pet is a purebred poodle or messy moggie, Lort Smith is always there when you need it most. The team here knows that the human-animal bond is a precious and magical thing and understands the depth of feeling people have when it comes to their pets. Animals make me smile, make me feel humble and make me realise there is much in life to love."



Peter van Rompaey
Vice Chair

Peter joined the Board in July 2008 and became Vice President in December 2011.

Peter holds a law degree and a Master of Business Administration, is an accredited business law specialist and was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in Victoria in 1976. He has worked as a commercial and competition

lawyer for over 35 years and has a keen interest in corporate governance.

"I first worked at Lort Smith as a student in 1972. Since then I have looked for opportunities to be involved and started providing both pro bono and paid legal advice to Lort Smith from about 1991. Lort Smith has such a great history, what an incredible community organisation! We are all privileged to work with Lort Smith. It is essential that we remain focused on our community role and maintain financial viability. Animals provide uncompromising warmth and affection and keep us grounded."



Graham Cunningham
Director

Graham joined the Board in June 2011. Graham has 35 years domestic and international investment banking experience specialising in mergers and acquisitions, project and property financings and major infrastructure projects. Graham is also the Chairman of Ronston International, Cockram Construction and an IT company in the health sector. He is a director of an international education company and a major private fund manager and investment group.

"Caring for animals is like caring for people. There is no end to the demand. We at Lort Smith need to make sure that we have the best facilities and people to provide leading-edge care for animals and their carers. At Lort Smith, all our staff and volunteers are passionate about caring for animals and their owners. It is a special place."



Dr John Harte
Director

John joined the Board in December 2012. John graduated with honours as a veterinarian from Dublin in 1989 and pursued further training in small animal medicine and surgery at the University of Minnesota. He has also worked in a small animal and equine practice. John is a managing partner of Integrity Governance, a specialist governance consultancy working with Boards and owners of businesses around Australia and overseas. He is also a fellow of the Australian, US and UK Institutes of Directors.

"It's great to be part of an organisation that makes a difference. We will always continue to be true to our mission and work to enhance the wellbeing of animals and the people who care for them. It's important our services continue to meet the changing needs of our clients and their pets. Animals give unconditional love, which makes such a tremendous positive difference in peoples' lives."



Barbara Hammon
Director

Barbara joined the Board in August 2014. She is a Board member of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne. Barbara graduated from Melbourne University with Arts/Law (Hons) degrees.

Professionally she practised as a solicitor, and for the last 14 years has specialised in corporate governance with a major Australian bank.

"Lort Smith is such a special part of the community because pets are so important in peoples' lives. Pets give love, companionship and support. Without Lort Smith's assistance, many pet owners would not be able to provide their animals with medical care they may desperately require. It's a wonderful organisation."



Kate Hamond
Director

Kate joined the Board in February 2015. Kate has worked for 30 years in the community sector, consumer protection, compliance and regulation. She is a Board member of Castlemaine Health and recently retired as a Commissioner at the Victorian Commission for Gambling & Liquor Regulation. Kate has led a community consumer protection body and established an aged-care support agency. Kate was also Victoria's Legal Ombudsman and the CEO of the Australian Retirement Village Association.

"Lort Smith is an inspiring resilient organisation, maintained through its financial independence, well-earned reputation as a leader in animal welfare and veterinary matters, and the devotion of volunteers and staff. Our animals are family members. I can't imagine a home without animals."

Retired Board members in 2016



Andrew Miles
Director

Andrew joined the Board in December 2016, having served as Company Secretary for six years, when on two occasions he was appointed Acting CEO.

Andrew is a (lapsed) Chartered Accountant, has a Master of Business Administration and post graduate qualifications in company secretarial practise and corporate governance. Andrew is currently on the Board and is Treasurer of Rotary Club of Balwyn and a director of Vets for Compassion Inc which in conjunction with ACTAsia has provided contemporary veterinary training to over 1,000 veterinary scientists in China. Andrew has many years' experience in Africa and the United Kingdom and brings these international skills, plus Australian skills, to the Board.

"I would like to use my finance and governance skills and my absolute passion and energy to make a quantum difference for animals that are sick, surrendered, abandoned and injured; their care and welfare is my primary concern."



Fiona Webster
Director

Fiona joined the Board in March 2016. Fiona has more than 20 years' experience in the health sector in operational management, safety and quality, service planning and redesign. Fiona is currently General Manager

of Health Operations at Telstra Health. Her previous roles have included Executive Director, Acute Operations, at Austin Health and Executive Director, Strategy, Quality and Service Redesign, at Austin Health. She has held senior management posts in the Victorian Government as well as in Britain's National Health Service. Fiona holds both a Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Health.

"I'm very pleased to be joining the Lort Smith Board. Our pets are family and deserve the very best care. I hope to use my skills in health care to assist in furthering Lort Smith's mission."



Glenister Lamont
President

Glenister joined the Board in August 2004 and became President in December 2011. Glenister is a professional non-executive director, sitting on Boards of publicly listed companies, government entities and investment committees. He has international operational management experience and his qualifications include a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons), MBA from IMD Switzerland a Fellow of AICD and Fellow of Financial Services Institute of Australia.

Glenister stepped-down from his position as President of the Lort Smith Board in October 2016 and retired his position on the Board in December.

"Lort Smith has had a special place in the community for the past 80 years. This is driven by our mission to assist people and their animals regardless of their circumstances. Our welcoming-to-all approach sets us apart."



Samantha Baillieu AM
Director

Samantha joined the Board in June 2000. Samantha is Chair of the Yugalbar Foundation and is director of a number of the Yugalbar Group of companies. She is on the subcommittee of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, called Tackling Tough Times Together and is Director of the Merricks General Winestore.

Samantha resigned from the Board in May 2016 and has taken up the role of Lort Smith's Co-Patron alongside her Aunt Lady Marigold Southey AC.

"As a human being I have always been painfully aware that we need animals as much as animals need us. The work of Lort Smith is tireless and I get great satisfaction out of assisting the organisation always strive for the best outcomes for all animals and their owners. Lort Smith never turns away any sick or injured animal that needs emergency treatment, regardless of the circumstances of their owner, and that gives me great comfort."



Dr Diane Gibney
Director

Diane joined the Board in December 2012. She has spent all of her professional life in small animal practices, improving the lives of many animals and their owners. She managed her own veterinary practice in Ballarat until

recently but now enjoys working part-time in a busy practice near home. She currently is a director of the Australian College of Veterinary Acupuncture.

Diane resigned her position on the Board in August 2016.

"Lort Smith is a very special and important part of the community. It has never lost sight of its primary vision - to support the more disadvantaged people of our community in their choice to share the human-animal bond. There is really no other organisation which compares in this regard. It is amazing to see the cohesive team of staff and volunteers all working with one goal in mind - to help every animal."



Raelene Harrison
Company Secretary

Raelene became Company Secretary in October 2015. Raelene has more than 15 years' experience in legal, company secretarial and corporate governance. She is a practising lawyer, holding a number of undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in law and corporate governance. For the past 12 years Raelene has lectured and tutored in law at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and presents regularly on corporate governance topics at industry groups and associations. Raelene has also completed an undergraduate degree in equine science.

"I am passionate about all animals and the mission and vision of Lort Smith. I love seeing the special bond between animals and their owners and how they benefit from the great work of Lort Smith."

Snapshot of achievements

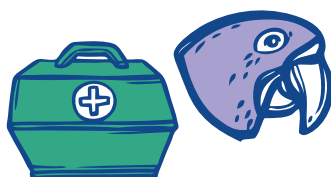
1,011
ANIMALS
REHOMED,
INCLUDING:

265 DOGS

623 CATS

123 OTHER

ANIMALS



12,725
VACCINATIONS

2,685
DESEXINGS

5,722
SURGERIES

24,865
ANIMALS
RECEIVED
VET CARE

27,228
BLOOD AND
PATHOLOGY TESTS

100 CT
SCANS





JULIA WITH PANDA



CUSTOMER SERVICE



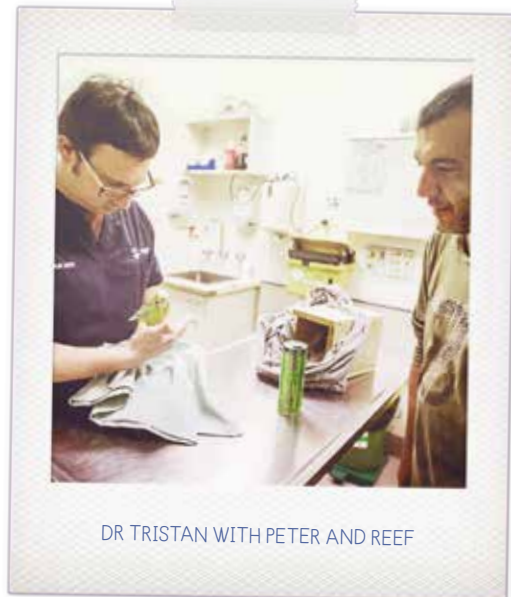
133
ANIMALS
IN EWA

37,966
(TOTAL)
CONSULTATIONS

9,314
(EMERGENCY)
CONSULTATIONS

116,225
PHONE CALLS

\$1,428,608
DISCOUNTS PROVIDED
TO PEOPLE OF
LIMITED MEANS



DR TRISTAN WITH PETER AND REEF



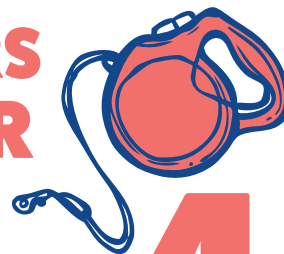
CASEY WITH LAYLA

192
VOLUNTEERS
CARED FOR

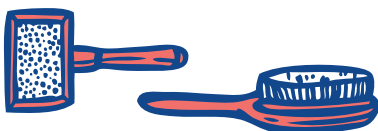


551

ANIMALS IN
FOSTER CARE



441
TOTAL
VOLUNTEERS



Year in review



Former Lort Smith Board member Virginia Edwards is awarded membership of the Order of Australia in Australia Day Honours



Surgery on Bubbles the goldfish to remove tumour



Honda the kitten saved from the engine cavity of a woman's car

JAN

FEB

MAR

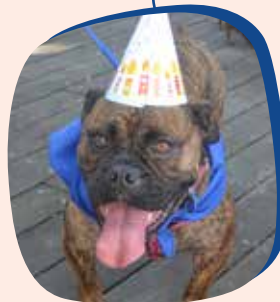
APR

MAY

JUN



Lort Smith's five year Strategic Plan is published



Lort Smith turns 80



Lort Smith CEO participates in CEO Sleepout with his dog Pearl – first ever dog to 'sleepout'



Seven hour surgery – longest in Lort Smith's history



Rosie Batty lunch



First Pet Therapy visit to Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre

PICTURE Stu Morley



New regular giving program, Pet Protector, is launched with Chrissie Swan as Ambassador



New major giving program, Guardian Circle, is launched at historic Myer family residence Cranlana



Lort Smith veterinarians pass Australian & New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists' membership exam – Dr Andrew Kapsis in internal medicine, Dr Johnathan Crawford and Dr Tracy Tang in surgery



Works commence on the Adoption Hub



New CT scanner becomes operational



Paris Hilton visits Lort Smith!

JUL — AUG — SEP — OCT — NOV — DEC



First Pet Therapy visit to Peter Mac Cancer Centre

PICTURE David Caird for Herald Sun



Glenister Lamont retires as Chair of Lort Smith Board and Barbara Pesel is announced new Chair



Lort Smith's resident cat Josie turns 18



Former Lort Smith Board member and now Co-Patron Sam Baillieu awarded membership of the Order of Australia in Queen's Birthday Honours



Annual Christmas lunch for Lort Smith bequestors is held

Awards



Metro Flinders with his adopter Narelle

Inspirational Pet of the Year

Metro Flinders

Metro Flinders may seem like a strange name to give a cat, however for this little feline it's the perfect name.

In April 2016 a little cat was found at Flinders Street station. He was alone, scared and in a very bad way. He couldn't stand for long periods of time and had to drag his legs.

The good Samaritan who found Metro Flinders brought him straight to Lort Smith. The vets diagnosed femoral neck deformities, which were causing the difficulties with walking and standing. Surgery was the only solution. He needed two operations – first on the left side and then on the right.

With the multiple surgeries, medication, food and overnight stays in the Hospital and Adoption Centre, Metro Flinders' veterinary care cost Lort Smith more than \$3,600.

We are thrilled to report that after multiple surgeries and months of TLC in the Hospital, Adoption Centre and from his foster carer, Metro Flinders is now on the road to recovery and has been adopted by his foster carer, Narelle.

Introducing the Volunteer of the Year

Jane Wilford is our 2016 Volunteer of the Year, recognising her outstanding contribution and dedication to Lort Smith.

Jane started volunteering for Lort Smith in October 2014 in the Adoption Centre kennels. She was our very first laundry volunteer, sometimes volunteering up to three shifts a week to help launder animal bedding and surgical scrubs.

Jane is caring and compassionate about all the animals and people at Lort Smith and is committed to the welfare of the animals. She is always happy to help and frequently offers to take on many additional shifts or swap shifts. She works diligently behind the scenes and always with a smile on her face.

Jane said she was inspired to volunteer after experiencing first-hand the care and compassion of Lort Smith when her dog passed away.

"I had been a client of Lort Smith with several dogs I had owned. My last dog Tom was cared for beautifully and the staff were so kind as he passed in my arms. After I received several calls to enquire on my welfare which was greatly appreciated. So there really was no question in my mind who I would volunteer with."

Sadly Jane is no longer able to volunteer for Lort Smith but has very fond memories of her time volunteering.

"I loved every moment at Lort Smith. It was a pleasure to help behind the scenes in the laundry as I knew this allowed staff to spend more time caring for the animals."

Jane added that she would miss the *"Welcoming staff and cuddles with beautiful animals."*



Enhancing our skills – Dr Alan Lawther Scholarship

The Dr Alan Lawther Scholarship honours the memory and enormous contribution veterinarian Dr Alan Lawther made to Lort Smith Animal Hospital.

Each year, a veterinary staff member receives the award, to enhance their veterinary skills in an area that will also benefit Lort Smith. This year the scholarship was also available to veterinary nurses.

The 2016 recipients were **Dr Sue Mae Chua** and nurse **Vivian Papageorgiou**.

Sue Mae will use the scholarship to partially fund a diagnostic imaging distance education course with the University of Sydney Centre for Veterinary Education.

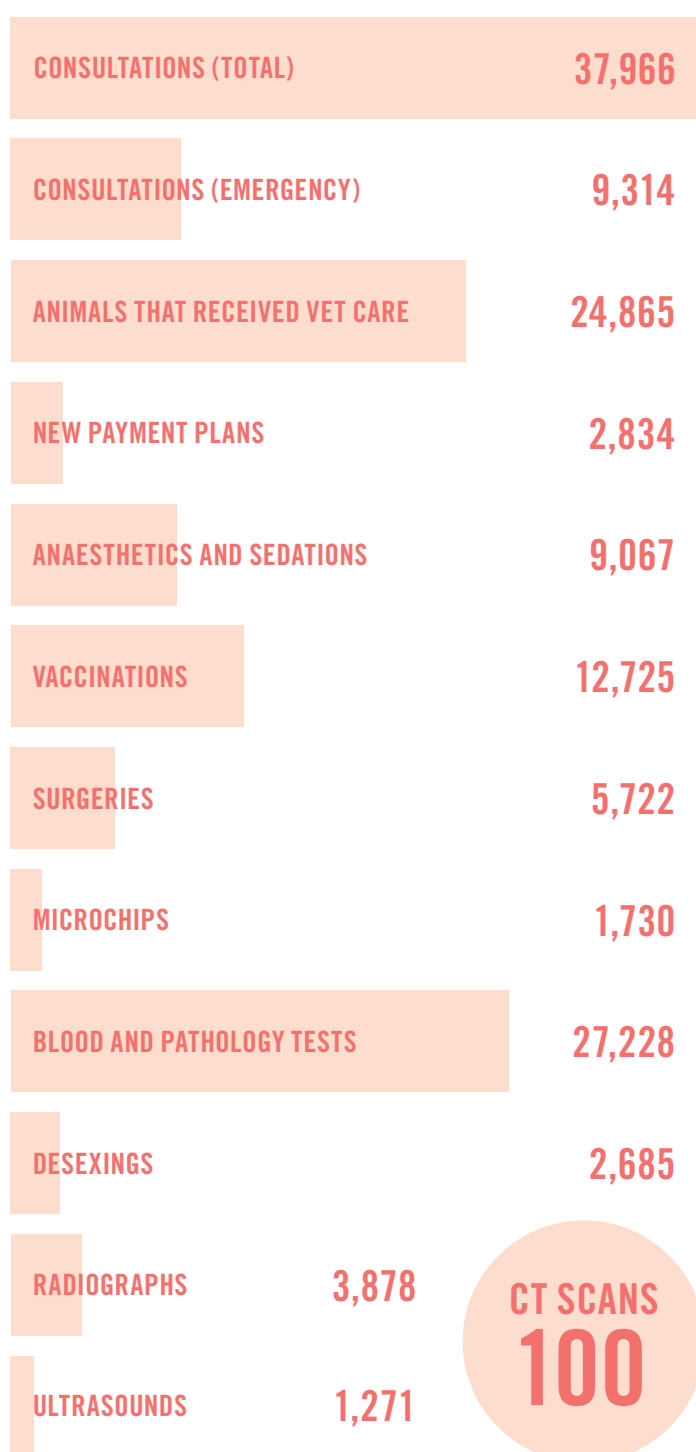
Vivian will use the award to complete a Diploma of Veterinary Nursing in Emergency and Critical Care through the Australian College of Veterinary Nursing.

Congratulations to both recipients.

Hospital news

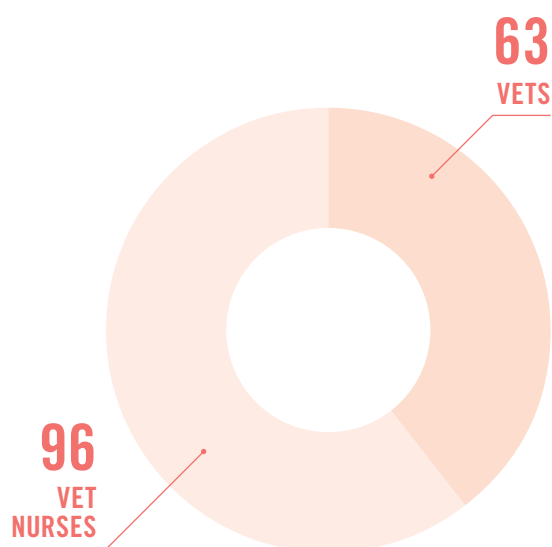
Lort Smith is proud to be Australia's busiest animal hospital. In 2016 this proved once again to be the case with our Hospital conducting 37,966 consultations and 5,722 surgeries translating to exceptional veterinary care for 24,865 animals, regardless of their owner's circumstances.

Hospital stats





Nurse Mel with Olive



The premise of caring for animals regardless of their owner's circumstances was at the very heart of why Louisa Lort Smith established Lort Smith 80 years ago. Louisa was committed to providing a service for the animals of the poor and disadvantaged. Today we still honour this legacy and last year we provided just over \$1.4 million in discounts to people of lesser means.

Payment plans are offered to all clients and are fundamental to supporting people experiencing genuine financial hardship. In 2016 we processed 2,834 payment plan arrangements.

Our Pets in Need program provides complete coverage of veterinary costs in exceptional cases. This program is fully funded via our generous donors. In 2016 we provided \$47,898 to 31 clients through the Pets In Need program.

Following the launch of overnight care in late 2015, an increasing number of our consultations take place at night. We are also seeing a larger number of emergency consultations, reflecting our reputation for providing high-quality veterinary care, including for people of limited means. Our mission is becoming increasingly important as veterinary services become more expensive in the community.

Most importantly the introduction of 24 hour care has proven incredibly successful resulting in a reduction in the average stay of animals in our Intensive Care Unit from 40 hours to 32 hours (a 20 per cent reduction).

Recognising our veterinary expertise

During 2016, three of our vets were awarded members of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists. Dr Andrew Kapsis (Head of Inpatients) received his membership in internal medicine, while Dr Tracy Tang and Dr Jonathan Crawford both received memberships in surgery.

College membership signifies a vet has expertise and competence in a nominated subject area. Members must have at least four years postgraduate experience as a vet, and have successfully completed both written and oral/practical examinations.

Andrew, Tracy and Jonathan join the other vets at Lort Smith who are College members. Dr Ildiko Plagnyi, Dr Juliette Riddall and Dr Caroline Carlton are members of the Feline chapter, and Dr Tristan Rich is a member of the Unusual Pets chapter.

Customer Services

Our Customer Services team is critical to the smooth running of the Hospital. They are the first point of contact for our clients. This dedicated team were responsible for managing the flow of 37,966 consultations in 2016 (an average of 104 per day) as well as receiving 116,225 phone calls (an average of 318 per day) and processing 46,947 transactions relating to payment plans.

The team is ever conscious of the important bond between animals and their owners and always endeavour to provide the best possible care and support to clients.



Richard with Felix



THE STORY OF RICHARD AND FELIX

At 85 years old Richard has lived an extraordinary life. Born in Poland in 1932, he was removed as an eight-year-old to a Siberian labour camp with his mother and brother. Richard then spent time living in Africa with his mother before arriving in Australia in 1950.

He now lives a modest life 40 kilometres north-west of Melbourne in a cosy home with his wife, Oscar the cat, and Felix the dog. Richard and his wife have seven children and have given up counting the number of grandchildren.

Richard is an incredibly intelligent and talented man. A former photographer and music teacher who also built a house from scratch – Richard has decided to write his autobiography.

Life for Richard and his wife is tough, receiving just \$300 per week on the aged-pension is a struggle when you have bills to pay. “If you are a single person it’s not too bad, but if you’re married, forget it. People say my wife and I should get a divorce!” laughs Richard.

Felix is an eight-year-old long haired Chihuahua. “A very human dog I’ve had since tiny,” says Richard who was wanting a small dog and found Felix advertised on a Coles noticeboard for \$300.

“For a long time he was just a dog I looked after, but now he is my buddy.”

“Since I got him, we’ve walked. About 1km every day, rain, hail or shine. That’s stopped now.”

Sadly, while enjoying their daily walks, Felix has been attacked twice. The first attack saw another dog come through Richard’s front gate and attack Felix in their yard. The second was just outside their house on the footpath.

The second attack was the worst, resulting in horrific injuries, four surgeries and the loss of a front leg.

“People only think about Felix, [they don’t] think about the person who was there. All of this happened out of my control. A Pitbull attacking a Chihuahua, what do you do? It was shocking to watch,” recalls Richard.

When Felix climbed up under the BBQ, Richard knew he was dying. Rangers and the police were called. Richard rushed Felix to his local vet but was told they couldn’t help him because they were closing, instead giving him Lort Smith’s business card.

Felix was brought to Lort Smith where staff tried to pin the leg with screws. Sadly there was no saving the leg.

Costs were mounting for Felix’s treatment which was something Richard simply couldn’t afford. “You can put a caveat on the house so it’s yours when I go, or take it out of my pension,” offered Richard. It was abundantly clear how much Felix meant to Richard and his family. A Pets in Need application was lodged – a financial assistance program for people experiencing genuine financial hardship.

Assessed on a case-by-case basis, Richard’s application was successful and Lort Smith agreed to cover 70 per cent of Felix’s treatment costs. “This was absolutely fantastic news, I was jumping up and down with joy.”

“Behind every cloud is a bit of sunshine,” says Richard.

“Lort Smith means a lot to me and I am absolutely happy with the whole Lort Smith experience. If I relied on the local vet Felix would be dead by now.”

Felix has matured since his operation because of this experience. He is absolutely petrified of other dogs as a result. However, Richard and Felix still take their daily walks together, but now it’s in a customised ‘pusher’.

“Felix spends a lot of time with me and we have become like one,” says Richard.



CT scanner

In 2016 we were extremely excited to introduce a state of the art CT scanner to our exceptional suite of Hospital services. The scanner was purchased through the generosity of some amazing donors and supplier GE.

The scanner combines multiple digital X-rays – taken as the patient travels through a circular gantry – to create a highly detailed 3D image. It is identical to scanners used on people and is one of the first in a veterinary practice in Australia.

According to Dr Russell Harrison, Head of Hospital Services, the scanner is transforming the Hospital and its services.

“With the CT scanner, we can diagnose and treat many illnesses and conditions we previously couldn’t. For example, a scan may help us diagnose cancer early, and we can operate to remove a tumour before the cancer spreads. But it can also help us avoid the trauma of unnecessary surgery, if the cancer has already spread,” said Dr Harrison.

The scanner made a big difference to how we treated Brocky, a Jack Russell Terrier/ Dashchund cross, who was brought in with an injured leg. An X-ray was inconclusive, but the CT scan showed the hairline fracture went right into his joint.

“From the X-ray, our usual process would have been to give Brocky some more time and see how he goes. But from the CT scan, it was obvious that surgery was the only solution for Brocky. This way, we saved Brocky the pain of limping on his fractured joint for a while longer, while vets waited to see if he improved,” said Dr Harrison.

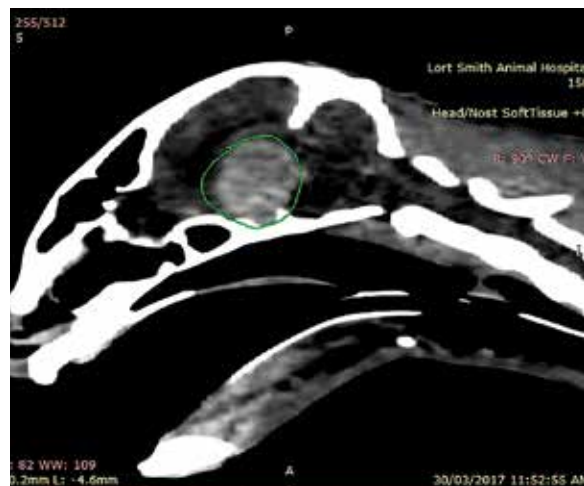
The CT scanner also helped our vets understand why Billy the goose wasn’t getting any better, after coming off second best in a fight with a dog. Despite his wounds healing well, he kept mysteriously puffing up. A quick trip through the CT scanner showed the problem.

“Billy had emphysema – he had a pelvic fracture and air pockets all over his body, and that’s why he kept puffing up,” said Russell.

Guided by the CT image, we inserted a stent to release the air and discharged Billy, wearing a custom-made knitted vest to keep the tube in place.



Billy the goose in CT scanner



CT scan of feline patient with brain tumour

With GE’s support, we can provide CT services at a discount for people on low incomes. We have performed just over 100 CT scans since the scanner was installed in September 2016, and more than half of these at a discounted rate.

*Nurse Pauline and Dr Russell with Toby in CT scanner
PICTURE David Caird for Herald Sun*

Adoption Centre news

The Lort Smith Adoption Centre offers sanctuary, rehabilitation, welfare and a new home for surrendered pets with no one to care for them. It also provides a critical service for people in crisis through its Emergency Welfare Assistance program, providing a safe and nurturing place for the animals of people in crisis to stay temporarily.

Adoption Centre statistics

**In 2016 we rehomed
1,011 animals**

265 DOGS

623 CATS

123 OTHER ANIMALS

**and we provided
Emergency Welfare Assistance to**

86 DOGS

43 CATS

2016 was a year of preparing for a monumental change at Lort Smith's Adoption Centre. After 18 months of research and planning, we commenced development of Lort Smith's Adoption Hub. The Adoption Hub represents a new era in animal adoption, providing a non-incarceration model of housing animals.

December saw the Adoption Centre start the transition into the 'Hub', in preparation to be officially open to the public in early 2017.

Meanwhile the day-to-day operations needed to continue to run smoothly, with the Adoption Centre finding new homes for 1,011 surrendered animals.

Lort Smith's Adoption Centre General Manager Serena Horg said that most of the animals surrendered for rehoming come from loving homes with approximately 20 per cent via the Hospital.

"Owner's surrender their animals because they cannot care for them anymore. The owner might be moving interstate or overseas, or perhaps they are going into a rental property that doesn't allow pets. Alternatively, they might be experiencing financial hardship, or simply lack the time necessary to care for the animal properly. Only rarely do we receive an animal that's been abused, or one that's done something wrong."

Like all the animals that come to Lort Smith, the animals that pass through our Adoption Centre receive exceptional veterinary care. They are all examined by a vet, and where necessary, vaccinated, desexed and microchipped. In some instances, complicated surgeries are required. These may include cruciate or patella repairs, and plating or pinning of broken legs. In these instances, trained Animal Welfare Officers will perform physiotherapy up to three times a day for animals post-surgery. The Adoption Centre team also test each animals' behaviour so that every owner finds a pet that's right for their home, family and lifestyle.

We have a network of wonderful foster carers, who love and care for our Adoption Centre animals in their homes. Our 192 volunteers cared for 551 animals in 2016 for an average stay of 23 days per animal, doing things like preparing animals for surgery, rehabilitating animals after surgery, and taking animals to and from health checks. But sometimes, they just give the animals some time away from the Adoption Centre, which is so important for our long term residents.

Our Adoption Centre also cares for sick and injured wildlife brought in by members of the public. We also care for stray dogs and stray adult cats until they can be transferred to the appropriate pound or facility. Lort Smith is not a pound, so we cannot rehome stray animals.



Animal Welfare Officer Sasha with Zara



Senior Animal Welfare Officer Cam with Serena and Forest

Our 192 volunteers cared for 551 animals in 2016 for an average stay of 23 days per animal, doing things like preparing animals for surgery, rehabilitating animals after surgery, and taking animals to and from health checks.

Lort Smith is fundamentally committed to finding a home for every animal capable of being rehomed. Sadly however, sometimes we have to euthanise animals we receive for rehoming, particularly if they suffer from extremely serious medical conditions, injuries or behavioural problems that affect their welfare. In 2016 our euthanasia rates once again dropped with four per cent of dogs euthanised (down from six per cent in 2015) and five per cent of cats euthanised (down from nine per cent in 2015).



Emma with Mia

THE STORY OF EMMA AND MIA

Finally, after living in student accommodation, Emma and her partner moved into their very own inner-city apartment where pets were allowed. "Straight away I said 'let's get a pet, let's get a cat,'" recalls Emma.

Emma lives a busy and at times stressful lifestyle. Studying international studies at RMIT and working at a supermarket, Emma also suffers from diabetes, insomnia and anxiety.

It was important for Emma and her partner to adopt a cat rather than purchase from a breeder and they specifically wanted an older cat.

"From the research I've done, older cats, especially those with disabilities, are the first ones to be put down. I understand they don't get adopted very often. People don't realise how long cats can live for."

"I've grown up with pets and they always help, they are always there to comfort. We wanted to help an animal that would help us."

And so began the internet searching, trawling websites for older cats. Emma was looking for a cat that was around 15-years-old but couldn't find any. She then came across Mia, an 11-year-old snow white domestic medium hair at Lort Smith. Described as a 'very gentle and patient girl, the type of kitty that appreciates the simple life.' Emma thought this was probably the oldest cat they were going to be able to get and phoned Lort Smith immediately to put her on hold.

Emma was greeted with a giggle by the Adoption Centre staff for Mia had been at Lort Smith for a staggering 193 days! The team were baffled as to why Mia hadn't been adopted as she was an absolute sweetheart and could only assume it was because of her age and special dietary needs.

As a patient of Royal Melbourne and a user of public transport, it was convenient for Emma and her partner to come and meet Mia at Lort Smith.

Six months later, Mia is very much a part of the family. "She takes advantage of us so much!" laughs Emma. And she has had an incredible effect on Emma's health.

"Mia has really helped with my insomnia and anxiety. I've been working with a doctor as I don't have a normal sleeping pattern and sleeping tablets don't work on me. If it's 6am and I still can't sleep, just cuddling Mia or patting her on the bed, is soothing. Mia comforts me really well."

"Mia has given me more responsibility. It's nice to come home and know I have someone to look after. It's a good amount of responsibility and makes me feel fulfilled."

"If I have a bad or stressful day at work or uni, I have a pet to come home to. Mia really helps me in that way," says Emma.

Emergency Welfare Assistance program

Our Emergency Welfare Assistance (EWA) program helps take care of animals that belong to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. We care for the animals of people in emergency and crisis circumstances who have a case worker (e.g. people with mental health issues, people who are homeless, people in hospital and people experiencing domestic violence).

In 2016, we cared for 86 dogs and 43 cats. During this time, we provided food, medical treatment, accommodation and plenty of TLC until the animals were reunited with their owner.

Sadly domestic violence victims make up approximately 30 per cent of our EWA clients. Studies in both Australia and overseas identify a direct link between animal abuse and domestic violence. Additionally, concern for the welfare of the family pet often impacts a victim's decision to leave an abusive situation.

Lort Smith CEO David Herman said people often stayed in domestic violence situations because their partner abused and tortured their pets, often in front of them or their children as a form of psychological abuse, control and manipulation.

"Sadly many people feel they can't leave an abusive environment because they cannot leave their pets behind. This is where Lort Smith's Emergency Welfare Assistance program helps, by providing somewhere for victims of domestic violence to leave their pets until they are safe and in a position to take them back," David added.

"What we know at Lort Smith is that the relationship between a pet and their owner is often extremely significant, with pets regularly considered a member of the family. Many people, especially those most

marginalised, sacrifice their own needs for their pets. We see it time and again with homeless people, who will feed and care for their animals before themselves and we see it consistently with our clients at Lort Smith, particularly with our Emergency Welfare Assistance recipients."

Sadly many people feel they can't leave an abusive environment because they cannot leave their pets behind.

Lort Smith's Emergency Welfare Assistance program supports people who are in crisis and have nowhere else to turn for the care of their pets. The people who use the program are some of the most vulnerable and marginalised in our community: people with mental health issues, the elderly, people who are incarcerated, and people experiencing domestic violence.

David said that "Sadly, due to limited funding, we turn away as many people as we are able to help."

In 2015 Lort Smith welcomed Australian of the Year, and tireless domestic violence campaigner, Rosie Batty, as an Ambassador.

Rosie is also a self-proclaimed animal lover. In June 2016 Rosie was the guest speaker at a Lort Smith luncheon at Merricks General Wine Store. She spoke passionately about her love of animals and the important work Lort Smith is doing in the domestic violence space through its Emergency Welfare Assistance program.

"We are so lucky to have Rosie as an Ambassador; to highlight the plight of animals being abused and the effects on pet owners who won't leave a domestic violence situation because they can't take their pets with them to a refuge."

"Our Emergency Welfare Assistance program is 100 per cent funded by donations and so it is only through the generosity of donors that we will be able to continue and hopefully grow this critical service in order to meet the increasing community demand," added David.



Lort Smith
caring for animals

OUR MISSION
TO IMPROVE THE
HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
OF ANIMALS
AND PEOPLE



Lort Smith Ambassador Rosie Batty

Community Outreach news

A big part of what makes Lort Smith unique is our amazing work supporting a broad cross-section of the community through our Community Outreach programs. Volunteers are a vital part of the Lort Smith family – we literally could not do what we do without them. Through their help we are able to extend our commitment to nurturing the human animal bond. Programs such as Pet Therapy provide comfort and support to thousands of people each year in hospitals, aged care facilities, mental health facilities and disability centres.

Volunteer statistics

441

VOLUNTEERS

140

NEW VOLUNTEERS IN 2016

“So pleased to be able to volunteer at Lort Smith. You obviously put a lot of work in to developing your volunteers and I would like to take this opportunity to say “well done”.

Lort Smith Volunteer

Helping Lort Smith provide valuable services

We had 441 volunteers in 2016, including 140 new volunteers. NAB staff continued their huge support, providing 1,170 hours of volunteering.

Volunteers help in many ways:

Adoption Centre volunteers help every day by looking after the animals, providing enrichment, tender loving care and cleaning.

Foster care volunteers take animals into their own home and care for them in a loving environment before they are adopted.

Pet Therapy volunteers and their dogs provide comfort and improve the wellbeing of patients and clients at the many facilities and hospitals Lort Smith supports.

Laundry volunteers keep the Hospital and Adoption Centre running smoothly by ensuring they are continuously stocked with clean and hygienic towels, bedding and scrubs.

Each month, volunteers facilitate the **Companion Animal Loss Support Group** and provide support and understanding for those grieving the loss of a pet.

Administration volunteers provide vital support across various departments including Fundraising and Communications, Customer Service, Dispensary, Human Resources and Finance.

Volunteer Advisory Committee are from different volunteer roles and provide valuable support and advice in relation to the volunteer program.



Lynsey with Pet Therapy dog Vlad

“Everyone is so kind and considerate and will help out when they can and thank you for your help. In all my years of paid employment, I’ve never felt so appreciated as I do here at Lort Smith as a volunteer.”

Lort Smith Volunteer

The Outlandish Program

Lort Smith is extremely proud to be a part of Sacred Heart Mission’s volunteer program Outlandish.

Outlandish enables women to ‘give back to the community’ by volunteering with socially and environmentally conscious organisations, such as Lort Smith.

The program, which was originally developed by Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services as a result of the Black Saturday bushfires, gave women a way to help people and animals in crisis. Eight years on and the program, now run by Sacred Heart Mission, supports women who benefit from increased community participation.

Outlandish has been placing volunteers at Lort Smith for a number of years now with volunteers saying it gives them an opportunity to care for others, commenting “you give, but you come back richer.”

Through the experience, Outlandish women have gained the confidence and skills to go on to volunteer independently at Lort Smith, volunteer at other organisations and also to study and seek paid work.

Helping people say goodbye to a pet

For most people their pet is considered an important member of the family and so losing a beloved pet can be incredibly traumatic. For this reason Lort Smith employs a Chaplain who offers a unique bereavement service to Lort Smith clients.

Our Chaplain Adele is there to support clients during the difficult process of saying goodbye and grieving for the loss of a pet. She provides an invaluable service which recognises what is at the heart of Lort Smith’s mission, the human/animal bond.

“Lots of people grieve for the unconditional nature of the relationship with their pet. It’s uncomplicated and forgiving, and that’s part of what they miss. For other people, their pet is a connection with a loved one or a reminder about other experiences in their life. When their pet dies, they don’t just lose their pet – they lose the connection to that part of their life,” said Adele.

For Adele, the most important part of her job is bearing witness to the life of someone’s pet.

“Sometimes all I can do is listen. People tell me the story of their pet, and in doing so, feel like they are honouring and respecting their pet’s memory,” says Adele.

Adele’s support for our clients and their families continues long after they say goodbye to their pet. During 2016, Adele organised two memorial services attended by 78 people. And she organises a monthly meeting of the Companion Animal Loss Support Group so people can share their stories, support each other and lessen their isolation.

She also made 1,039 calls and wrote 2,038 sympathy cards to people whose pets had passed.

“I write so many cards, and sometimes I think they just must end up in the ether. But then I get a response from someone, and I know the card made a difference.”

Support statistics

2,038

SYMPATHY CARDS SENT

1,039

PHONE CALLS TO CLIENTS

78

ATTENDEES AT TWO MEMORIAL SERVICES

THE STORY OF JUDY AND CUBBY

Judy lost her mother in 2010. She fell into a deep depression, suffered anxiety and didn't want to get out of bed. She admits she even had suicidal thoughts. When she returned to work, she was moved to a different area that was less stressful for her.

A colleague suggested to Judy that she should adopt a dog or cat. "I've never been around cats so I went online to look for a dog, and there she was, the sweetest face I had ever come across. She was fat, so fat! She pulled on my heart strings and I fell in love straight away. When I took her home it was like all the pain that I had been feeling in my heart had eased, all because of this dear soul," she says.

For five years, Judy and Cubby were inseparable, enjoying walks and even travelling on trains and trams together. With no children, Cubby was Judy's baby. In her later years, Judy even brought her a stroller to ease her arthritis pain.

Judy chose to bring Cubby to Lort Smith because of the payment plans on offer. It was a lot cheaper than other vet clinics and a friend had recommended her to Lort Smith.

Cubby received her regular vaccinations and check-ups but it wasn't until she was scheduled to have a dental treatment that Cushing's Disease was discovered from a blood test. This was treated with medication and regular tests.

Over time Judy noticed Cubby wasn't herself and tests confirmed Cubby had developed pancreatitis, kidney disease and diabetes. When the pain became too much, Judy came to Lort Smith to have her put to sleep.

Judy's grief returned and she sought advice from her doctor. Judy was told to keep busy and do something she loved. And with that, Judy enrolled in a Cert II in Animal Studies Vet Nursing Stream at Melbourne Polytechnic. Cubby had led her to a complete career change.

"I had a light bulb moment, I thought I would love to give back to Lort Smith by volunteering. This is to thank the staff from the bottom of my heart for the care and compassion they all showed myself and especially the love of my life my Cubby during the good times, the not so good times and the final days of her life. Cubby was always treated as my companion and they all showed her love," says Judy.

Judy recently became a Lort Smith volunteer, joining more than 400 other animal-loving, passionate and generous individuals.

"I have a standard shift every Wednesday in the laundry. This involves walking around the wards and ensuring that the staff have enough supplies of clean



Volunteer Judy in the laundry with image of Cubby

and fresh towels and bedding which then allows them to focus on the brilliant work they all do."

"The volunteer induction was very thorough and I am enjoying the volunteer experience. It's great to meet all the staff and other volunteers."

"At first I thought it would be very difficult for me to return to the place where I put my girl to sleep. But I have found it very healing and comforting to be around people that went out of their way to make my Cubby as comfortable as possible. Dealing with grief is very difficult but when you are around such beautiful caring souls, it makes it a whole lot easier," she says.

Judy has taken advantage of the bereavement services on offer at Lort Smith. "I went to a memorial service but it was a bit hard for me because it was so close to when Cubby passed. There is another one coming up and I'm going to do a speech for her. Every time I come in here, I speak to Adele [Lort Smith Chaplain]. She is beautiful. She rang me up two days after I lost Cubby to offer her condolences."

Judy's 50th birthday is approaching. Instead of gifts, she is asking friends/family to donate to Lort Smith. "I'm going to be sad if you buy me something, I want you to donate to Lort Smith!"

"I volunteer for several reasons. Because I want to give back to Lort Smith because of the way everyone treated Cubby. Never just as a number. And because there are people around me that understand, they are on the same page as me. I don't want to surround myself with negative people so I come here, where people are more understanding."

"Lort Smith means everything to me. I class it like the Royal Children's Hospital. If not better! And I tell people that. There are angels here," she says.



Pet Therapy team Erna and Savannah

Impacting lives through Pet Therapy

The therapeutic benefits of the human-animal bond are well-documented, and can include emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual benefits. But not everyone can have a pet, particularly patients and residents in aged care facilities, hospitals, disability services and other facilities.

Lort Smith Pet Therapy has been providing a much needed service for more than 25 years. Our Pet Therapy volunteers take their specially assessed pet dogs to visit people who are ill, lonely or experiencing adversity. These visits bring comfort, joy and relief, improving patient/resident wellbeing and brightening the day of everyone they meet. They also provide great stress relief, respite and support to facility staff, who often work in very challenging environments, where a hug or a moment spent connecting with an animal can act as a circuit breaker bringing a calming effect.

Pet Therapy volunteer Paige and her dog Walter volunteer at the Monash Children's Hospital. She explains why she and Walter are part of our Pet Therapy program:

"Walter loves seeing the kids as much as they love seeing him! As expected, it feels wonderful knowing we brighten up the day for many children and their families."

We had 101 volunteer human-dog teams in 2016, who visited 43 facilities across Melbourne. In keeping with the Lort Smith mission of helping people regardless of their circumstances, we are developing some new relationships with services that deal with disadvantaged people.

We also have a Pet Therapy team that visits the Hope Street Youth and Family Services Hostel, which provides a safe place for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. As well as creating moments of relief for young people, our Pet Therapy volunteers are helping educate young people about caring for a pet.

Importantly, our teams are not there to help just residents and patients. They also help relieve stress for families and staff members working at the various facilities. Our Pet Therapy Coordinator, recounted a recent visit volunteer Elysha and her dog Lucy made to the Royal Children's Hospital:

"Lucy performed the most amazing tricks for the children and their families, from catching balls to dancing. But the best trick was watching her do her prayers. This made family members, their children and the staff laugh out loud, and was wonderful respite for them."

Pet Therapy statistics

3,874

NUMBER OF HOURS OF PET THERAPY VISITS COMPLETED

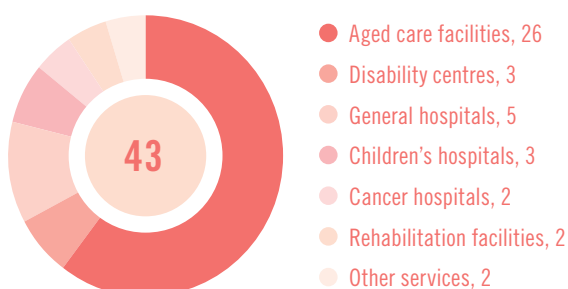
101

NUMBER OF HUMAN-DOG PET THERAPY TEAMS

15

NUMBER OF NEW PET THERAPY TEAMS WHO STARTED IN 2016

NUMBER OF FACILITIES VISITED – 43



Communications

At 31 December 2016, Online Circle Digital's Annual Australian Facebook Performance Report ranked Lort Smith's Facebook page as the eighth largest pet related page in Australia. More notably, the Lort Smith Facebook page measured second highest in Share of Engagement in our category with 14.8 per cent of the pet related market.

Social media community

We have a strong and extremely loyal social media following that continues to grow. Our audience is very much an extension of our team, helping us source homes for our animals and generously donating during appeal periods. We are never short of content, with our most popular posts being successful animal adoptions.

Social media statistics

↑
43% 43% INCREASE OF
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



↑
10% 10% INCREASE OF
TWITTER FOLLOWERS



↑
196% 196% INCREASE OF
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



↑
16.7% WEBSITE VIEWED
542,822 TIMES



Capitalising on our heavily engaged audience, we launched Project Mia and Project Timmy in 2016.

Mia, an 11-year-old white domestic medium hair cat was continuously being overlooked in our Adoption Centre. This baffled us as she was an absolute sweetheart. We made a dedicated effort to find Mia her perfect home by launching Project Mia in mid-October. We saturated our social media channels with photos and videos of Mia. We made a special request for our followers to share our posts and they did just that. Over 13,000 people took time to read and/or share Mia's plight. She appeared in the Moonee Valley Leader and featured heavily in our regular 'Caturday' posts. After 193 days in care, she was adopted.

"I'm so glad we rescued our baby (Mia). We've had her for two months now and she's such a princess. She has helped with my sleeping and anxiety and I'm so thankful I have her." Emma – Adopter.

Timmy is a four-year-old domestic short hair cat that is a sensitive little soul. He required a quiet and relaxed home. As the shelter environment was a little overwhelming for Timmy we placed him into foster care with Home Suite Home Cattery. We launched Project Timmy at the end of June, again saturating social media. Thanks to our amazing followers, one Facebook post reached a staggering 45,000 people. After 95 days in care, Timmy found a new home and now lives with fellow ginge Winston.

The power of media

Throughout 2016, both the Moonee Valley Leader and Channel 7 continued their support featuring animals available for adoption on a weekly basis. Channel 7 are incredibly proud of their 100 per cent success rate – every dog featured in their Dog of the Week segment has found a new home.

Lort Smith's Dr Leanne Pinfold provides health advice and awareness raising on Triple R's Feature Creatures monthly segment. From lumps and bumps to travelling with pets – Leanne covers it all. In 2016 she also completed an eight week Triple R broadcaster training course.

Leader
 Join now and get \$600 free brokerage!
 Lort Smith and MFB rescue five-week-old kitten trapped in car's engine bay

Leader
 Lort Smith giving older cats up free following summer of surrenders

Herald Sun
 Playful three-legged cat Pickles is 'the perfect pet'

100 NEWS
 What should you do if you find a baby bird on the ground?

Mosquito plague prompts warning of 'traumatising' pet deaths

7 News Melbourne
 Bella and Riley are looking to find a quiet home together.

100 NEWS
 Melbourne vet saves life of Bubbles the Goldfish by removing brain tumour

Vaccinated pups safe as parvo hounds city

THREE TIMES THE FUN FOR ADOPTIVE 'MUM'

Leader
 Kittens use up first of nine lives after being found dumped in a Brunswick West rubbish bin

THE AGE Victoria
 Lort Smith Animal Hospital needs almost \$500,000 for adoption centre vet care

Gizmo laps up cuddles at new home after loss

Leader
 Lort Smith Animal Hospital reports spike in deadly canine parvovirus across Melbourne

100 NEWS
 Kangaroo with joey shot with arrow in Melbourne's north-east

BYO reindeer antlers please.

Australia Day barbecue could leave family pet sick as a dog, owners warned



Pet Protector 2017 calendar

Fundraising

Lort Smith is an organisation that is built on philanthropy. In 1935 Louisa Lort Smith had a vision to build an animal hospital to provide a place where people of limited financial resources could obtain veterinary care for their animals. This vision was made possible through the incredible generosity of Lady Lyle who donated £5,000, an enormous sum in 1936, to build the new Hospital.

Today Lort Smith still stands proudly in the same location in Villiers Street North Melbourne. A new Hospital has been built since 1936 but the foundations of what make the organisation so special are still as solid as they were in 1936.

In 2016 we are only able to continue our work because of the incredible generosity of the community. Through donations, community fundraising, corporate support and bequests in 2016 Lort Smith received more than \$5.5 million in funding from the public.

This money ensures the financial viability of Lort Smith – helping to fund the Adoption Centre, Emergency Welfare Assistance program, our Pets in Need program, discounts for people of limited means and caring for injured wildlife.

2016 was a significant year for fundraising at Lort Smith. The organisation launched two new fundraising initiatives: the Guardian Circle and Pet Protector.

Lort Smith's new guardians

Launched in November 2016, the Lort Smith Guardian Circle is a major giving program designed to bring together people who share a common love of animals and a commitment to positive social impact.

Our Co-Patrons, Lady Marigold Southey AC and Samantha Baillieu AM, hosted the launch of the program at the historic Myer family home, Cranlana with former journalist and Pratt Foundation CEO Sam Lipski as guest speaker.

The funds donated via our Guardian Circle will go towards specific projects or areas of need such as equipment, new facilities, program development and leadership training, as well as critical animal care and wellbeing. In 2016 Guardian Circle donations have been utilised to help establish our new state-of-the-art Adoption Hub

Contributions may also help to provide discounts to people of limited means so that their pets receive the best possible veterinary care regardless of their owner's circumstance, or provide life-saving and critical veterinary care to animals in our Adoption Centre.



To find out more about joining the Guardian Circle, please contact our Fundraising Team on 03 9321 7207.



Lort Smith Pet Protector Ambassador Chrissie Swan, Lort Smith CEO David Herman and Pearl

Introducing Chrissie Swan, Pet Protector

We were thrilled when animal lover and self-confessed crazy cat lady, Chrissie Swan, joined our team of ambassadors in November 2016. Chrissie is the official Ambassador of our new regular giving program Pet Protector, which helps us to support sick, injured and vulnerable animals every day.

Chrissie explained why regular giving is so important:

“Animals just bring so much joy into your life and it makes me sad to think of animals that don’t have loving homes or can’t get the treatment they need because their owners can’t afford it. That’s what Pet Protector is about, protecting sick, injured and vulnerable animals. Becoming a Pet Protector is such an awesome idea, and I’m thrilled to be an Ambassador for the program.”

Regular giving ensures Lort Smith has the financial means to dedicate funds to help protect the health and wellbeing of animals in need. A minimum monthly tax-deductible donation of \$25 can make a real difference, by:

- providing veterinary care to animals surrendered through our Adoption Centre
- assisting vulnerable people and their pets through our Community Outreach programs
- assisting disadvantaged and vulnerable people who cannot cover their pets’ veterinary costs.

As well as acting as our Ambassador, Chrissie recently adopted two kittens from Lort Smith – Joni (after Joni Mitchell) and Bob (after Bob Dylan). And it’s not the first time. Chrissie’s very first pet was a jet black moggie cat called Louie, that she adopted from Lort Smith.



Lort Smith Adoption Hub

Shared Services

IT Department

Our Information Technology (IT) team supports a variety of applications and hardware to ensure all systems continue to talk to each other, and cope with ever-increasing system requirements. In 2016, the IT team completed 1,683 documented support requests (average of 32 per week), achieving an impressive completion rate of 96 per cent.

Additionally, the team also completed key projects including:

- upgrade to Office 365;
- update of applications to streamline user experience; and
- update of backup processes to enhance IT disaster recovery.

The stability and continuity of Lort Smith services is paramount, and the IT team considers patient care as a priority in its decision making process. This is supported by:

- off-site backups to the Cloud;
- email continuity; and
- prioritised clinical support.

The department continues to focus on stability and user experience through enhancements, upgrades and fit for purpose technological partners.

Building Services

Our Building Services and Maintenance team support the organisation both with everyday tasks and specific projects.

In 2016, the team responded to more than 2,000 documented tasks which is an average of 40 requests per week.

The operational nature of the business combined with an ageing facility has meant support required from the Building Services team has steadily increased.

Specific major projects included the refurbishment of Lyle House and the building works undertaken to facilitate the installation and operation of the CT scanner.

In 2016 we also supported additional volunteers and student nurses with items such as access cards, security requirements and Occupational Health and Safety.

Occupational Health and Safety continues to be given top priority, resulting in a number of improvements, including:

- hands-on fire training for the Emergency Control Officers;
- rotation of Health & Safety representatives;
- appointment of 15 new First Aid Officers;
- review of emergency and evacuation processes;
- externally monitored fire panel (MFB & Chubb Security);
- improved safety signage; and
- increased on-site security guard services to cover all public contact hours.



Financials

The overall financial result from operating activity for the calendar year 2016 was a surplus of \$1.5 million (compared to a surplus of \$9.2 million in 2015 which included one-off proceeds from the sale of land).

The surplus in 2016 was principally due to bequests received, close management of expenses and improved Hospital profitability via the extension of services providing overnight care. As budgeted, the Adoption Centre reported a deficit from its operations.

Trading conditions remained good in 2016, with veterinary services revenue of \$13.5 million (including revenue from the services provided to the Adoption Centre). This result is up from \$11.9 million in 2015. The revenue was principally derived from core veterinary service offerings including consultations, hospitalisation, surgery and pathology.

The Hospital achieved a major milestone with the introduction of the CT scanner in September 2016.

In line with our mission, discounts to people of limited means increased in 2016 to more than \$1.4 million, up from \$1.3 million in 2015, an increase of seven per cent.

Bequest income reached \$4.3 million in 2016, compared to \$8.6 million in 2015. Donations and fundraising revenue was \$1.7 million compared to \$1.3 million in 2015. Bequest and donation income are vital revenue sources of support for Lort Smith which underpin our ability to provide our wide range of services and programs including the discounts to people of limited means.

The Board and management sincerely thank the people and organisations who assisted Lort Smith through donations, bequests and in-kind support in 2016.

Lort Smith operations are labour intensive and in 2016 personnel costs were \$12.4 million. This included the wage increase provided as part of the Lort Smith Enterprise Bargaining Agreement; coupled with items such as education, training and staff amenities.

Lort Smith wrote-off bad and doubtful debts of \$460,000 or four per cent of Hospital revenue in 2016 compared to \$388,000 in 2015 which was also four per cent of Hospital revenue.

Dividend and interest income increased in 2016 to \$1.2 million compared to \$722,000 in 2015.

This stable financial performance was a strong result for Lort Smith in 2016.

Financial statements

Statement of Financial Performance

REVENUE	2016	2015
Veterinary Revenue	13,457,903	11,927,304
Adoption & Surrender Fees	188,019	199,006
Bequests, Legacy & Trusts	4,345,694	8,564,783
Donations & Fundraising Income	1,783,718	1,347,059
Dividends & Interest	1,139,830	721,790
Rental Income	11,452	23,237
Other Income (incl. Sale of Asset)*	20,307	5,029,676
TOTAL INCOME	20,946,923	27,812,855
EXPENDITURE		
Veterinary Expenses	4,328,980	4,134,048
Discounts to Customers	1,428,608	1,332,057
Adoption Expenses	285,161	271,656
Event, Campaign & Mail-out Costs	507,592	465,877
Corporate & Administration	493,790	830,253
Wages & Employee Related Costs	12,407,961	11,537,095
TOTAL EXPENSES	19,452,092	18,570,986
NET PROFIT FOR YEAR	1,494,831	9,241,869

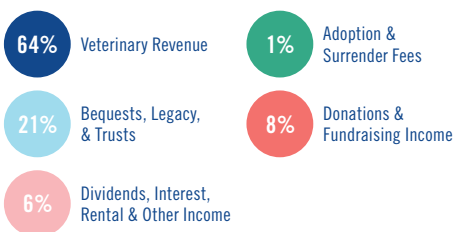
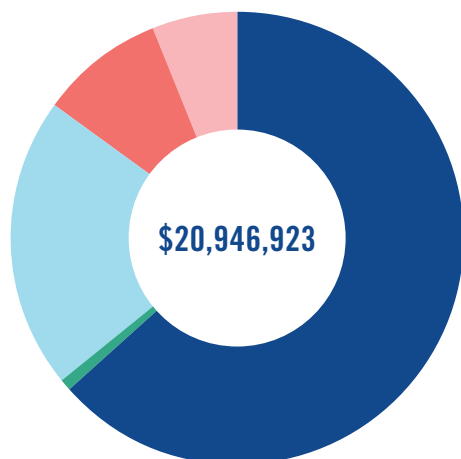
*Other Income in 2015 includes proceeds of \$4,899,392 from the sale of an asset for master planning purposes

Statement of Financial Position

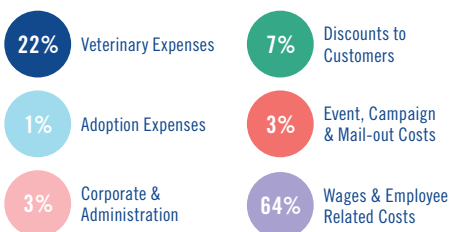
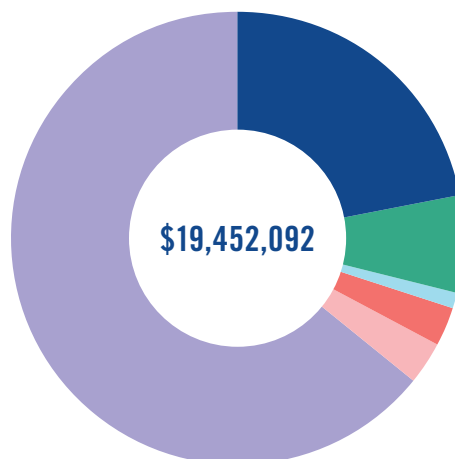
ASSETS	2016	2015
Cash & Other Equivalents	4,599,293	10,495,529
Investments	24,238,842	17,867,500
Trade & Other Receivables	1,491,872	1,352,596
Inventories	359,270	232,485
Prepayments	27,604	35,507
Property, Plant & Equipment	20,738,754	19,020,517
Investment Property	-	1,300,000
TOTAL ASSETS	51,455,635	50,304,134
LIABILITIES		
Trade & Other Payables	1,240,482	1,962,106
Employee Benefits	1,530,467	1,358,042
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,770,949	3,320,148
NET ASSETS	48,684,686	46,983,986

Overview

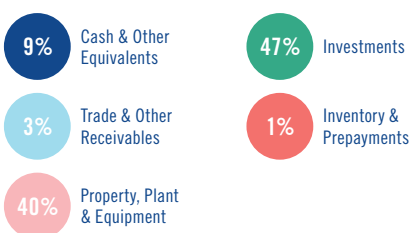
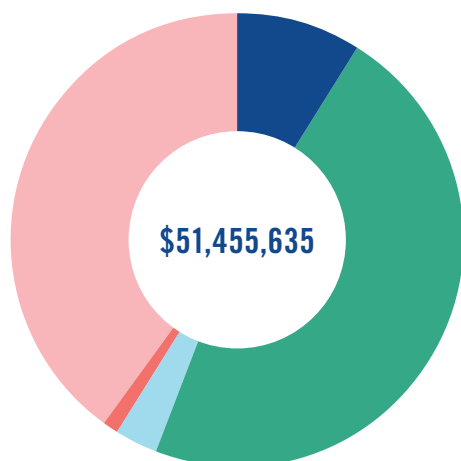
REVENUE



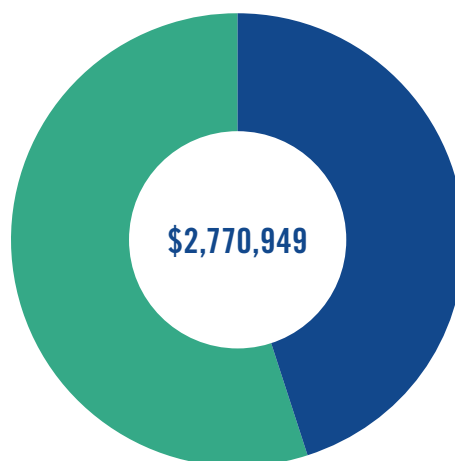
EXPENDITURE



ASSETS



LIABILITIES



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations for their continued support and assisting us to deliver on our mission:



SCOBIE AND CLAIRE
MCKINNON TRUST

We would also like to acknowledge all our Guardian Circle members for their support throughout the year:

Ms Tania Austin
Mrs Samantha Baillieu AM
Mrs Caroline Brand
& Mr Chris Holland
Mr William Conroy
The Cornish Family
Mr Graham Cunningham
& Mrs Ann Cunningham
Mr Michael Cunningham
Mr John Dale
Mrs Angela Darling
Dr Lisa Deering
Miss Jillian Don
Ms Gillian Dorris
Mrs Lucy Downer
Mr Trevor Dymond
Ms Virginia Edwards AM
Miss Paulina Embury
Mrs Jennifer Erdos
Mrs Meredith Evans
Mr James Fowler
& Mrs Beryl Fowler
Professor Richard Fox
Dr Diane Gibney
Ms Sandra Gibson
Ms Prue Gillies
Ms Louise Gourlay
Mr Anthony Hallam
& Mrs Catherine Hallam
Mr Tim Hammon
& Mrs Barbara Hammon
Ms Kate Hamond

Dr Russell Harrison
Dr John Harte
Mr Carl Hartnett
Mrs Jeanette Harvey
Ms Elouise Holmes
Ms Nicole Hunter
Ms Karin Jalland
Ms Joyce Jeffrey
Ms Laura Jolliffe
Ms Carolyn Kay
Ms Dellis Kaye
Ms Veronica Kochan
Mr Glenister Lamont
Mr John Levy
Ms Laura Lewis
Mrs Sally Lindsay
Mrs Dianne Lucas
Ms Maria Lui
Mr Rick Macdonald
Miss Irma Mawson
Ms Lelde McCoy
Ms Michelle McLean
Mr Andrew Miles
Ms Beverley Milne
Ms Elisabeth Murchison
Mr Rupert Myer AM
Mrs Dorothy Neal
Mrs Susie Palmer
Ms Barbara Pesel
Miss June Peters
Mr Roger Poole
& Mrs Catherine Poole

Lady Primrose Potter AC
Mr Roy Poyser
Ms Danielle Press
Mrs June Price
Ms Jane Riddell
Mr Denis Roche
Mrs Colleen Rorke
Ms Janice Sabin
Mr Peter Scott
& Mrs Ofelia Scott
Ms Sarah Gardenia Seymour
Ms Lindy Sheldermine
Mrs M J Shell
Mr Graeme Sinclair
Ms Margaret Simmons
Ms Elaine Small
Lady Marigold Southey AC
Miss Shirley Sullivan
Ms Lyn Templer
Mrs Pat Trevare
Ms Judy Uglov
Mr Peter van Rompaey
& Mrs Sandra van Rompaey
Ms Barbara Vial
Dr Elizabeth Walker
Mr Brian Watson
& Mrs Edwina Le Maistre
Miss Sue Webb
Ms Patricia Werner
Ms Elisabeth White
Ms Ingrid Widdison

With special thanks to Hoopoe and Ragamuffin Pet Photography.





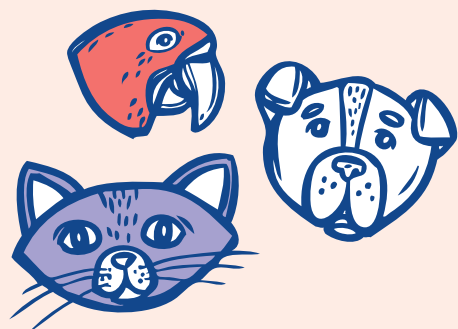
Thank you to all our dedicated staff and volunteers. Your commitment to improving the lives of animals and people, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, is truly awe inspiring.





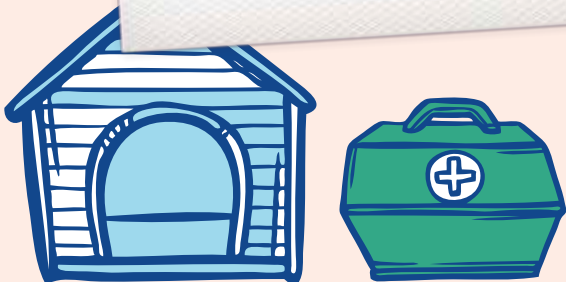
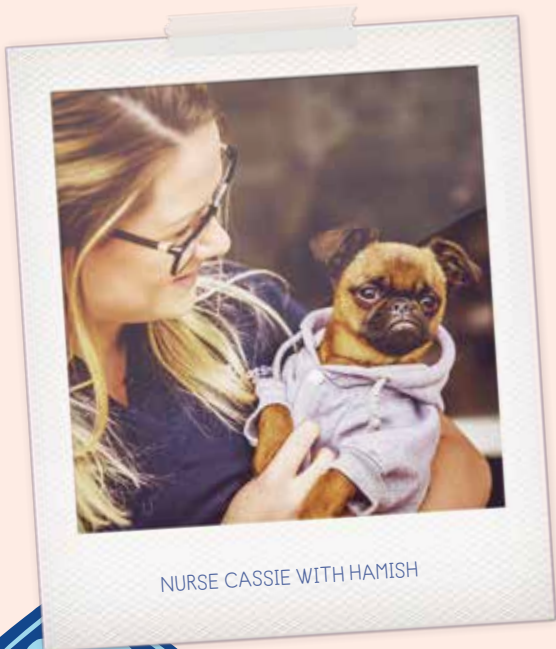
Lela with Bella
PICTURE David Caird for Herald Sun

Support Us



Lort Smith does not receive any ongoing government funding. We would not exist without contributions from donors.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we can fulfill our mission of enriching the lives of animals and their carers.



You can support Lort Smith by:

Donating: Every donation – whether \$10 or \$1000 – helps. All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Fundraising: You can do your own fundraising activity to help animals in need. Community fundraising activities not only raise funds for animals in need, they increase brand awareness in the local community.

Leaving a bequest: Bequests are one of the most valuable ways our supporters can help. By leaving a gift in your Will, you can help Lort Smith make a significant difference to the lives of animals in need.

Sponsoring an enclosure: We use the funds raised by sponsoring an enclosure to feed, care for and rehome the beautiful animals surrendered to Lort Smith.

Shopping online: Buy some Lort Smith merchandise for your furry or human friends.

Workplace giving: Make a donation from your pre-tax income.

Volunteering: Volunteer your time to help Lort Smith.

Making an in-kind donation: You can donate everyday items (such as towels, blankets and pet food) to our Hospital and Adoption Centre.

Make a donation

Every donation, big or small, makes a difference to Lort Smith and the animals in our care. All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

I would like to join **Pet Protector** by making a regular monthly gift of:

☐ \$25 a month ☐ \$50 a month

chosen amount: \$

I would like to make a **one-off** donation of:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100

chosen amount: \$

Your Details

First name	
Surname	
Address	
Suburb/State	Postcode
Telephone	Mobile
Email	
DOB	

Payment Details

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Card Number

Expiry date: /

Name on card

Signature

— OR —

☐ Cheque/money order enclosed, made payable to Lort Smith (one-off donations only)

Please return this form to:

Lort Smith
24 Villiers Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051

or call 03 9321 7207 to make a donation.

☐ Please send me information about leaving Lort Smith a bequest in my Will.

Lort Smith collects your personal information in order to inform you about our activities and request your support for them, and to otherwise run our organisation. If it is unreasonable or impracticable to obtain your personal information directly from you, we will seek to obtain it from a publically available source or a third party. You have the right to refuse to provide us with your personal information however, if you do so we may be unable to deal with you. We may disclose your personal information to our service providers, financial institutions, our related companies, member organisations and other business partners, your agents and representatives and any other person or organisation where you have given your consent or we are required or authorised by law to disclose.

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MAKE  a
donation



Animal Hospital
24 Villiers Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051
03 9328 3021

Adoption Hub
38 Villiers Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051
03 9321 7240

Animal surrenders
(BY APPOINTMENT ONLY)
cats & small animals: 03 9321 7241
dogs: 03 9321 7260

Donations & Fundraising
03 9321 7207

Bequests
03 9321 7213

Volunteering
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Lort Smith
caring for animals

